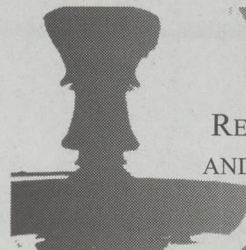




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STUDENT APATHY
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 BEHIND IN ENROLLING FOR AN
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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 63, ISSUE NO. 4

MARCH 30, 2005

IT'S YOUR NEWSPAPER

Bagramian No-Show at ASU Meeting

■ Valley College's Associated Student Union's troubles continue as President Levon Bagramian shifts focus to advisor and student services.

By LAGINA PHILLIPS
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In a statement read to the Associated Student Union executive board Tuesday, ASU president Levon Bagramian blamed others for his problems with board members and said they need to think for themselves.

"The sad fact is that some among us are instruments in the hands of our advisor and some folks in the student services," Bagramian wrote. "My advice to those folks would be: Please regain your independent thinking and individuality."

Earlier this month the executive board voted 7-1-2 to request Bagramian's resignation. After the meeting, the ASU president told the Valley Star that he would most likely not resign. In what was the first meeting since the vote of no confidence, Bagramian did not attend because of a family matter, according to his statement.

Board secretary Nydia

Gasperi read the seven-minute statement Bagramian wrote. Bagramian's letter said the board violated the Robert's Rules of Order at the last meeting, admitted to making some errors and said ASU advisor Sherri Rodriguez is to blame for his troubles with the board.

"I don't think his assessment of Robert's Rule is accurate," Rodriguez said. "He's claiming I'm the one who orchestrated the vote of no confidence but I was not. I wish I had thought of it."

ASU Vice President Jessie Salas wasn't moved by Bagramian's report and still stands by the board's vote.

"He dug himself in the hole and he has the nerve to turn it around and say it's because 'Jessie and Ron don't like me,'" Salas said. "This is not personal, although he [Bagramian] has not been able to distinguish that."

The board's next meeting will be Tuesday, April 5 in Campus Center 102.



CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR
PINCH HITTING - ASU Vice President Jessie Salas presided over Tuesday's ASU board meeting in the absence of embattled President Levon Bagramian.

Mayoral Candidate Debate Slides Into Mud

By H.M. MONTES DE OCA
 SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Both Los Angeles mayoral candidates began the debate Tuesday with a handshake but before the end, the incumbent mayor James Hahn and councilmember Antonio Villaraigosa fell back on the usual tactic of personal attacks.

The debate at Cal State Northridge opened with questions to the candidates about improving education in the Los Angeles Unified School District, their stance on driver licenses, LAPD policies for undocumented immigrants and how each plans to improve traffic. In response to these questions, each candidate shared their ideas while admitting that education and driver licenses are not within the direct control of the mayor, but require cooperation and input from the top Los Angeles officials.

On the issue of how to improve the 53 percent drop-out rate at LAUSD high schools, Hahn touted the after-school programs already in place while suggesting

more charter schools and better information about financial aid for juniors and seniors. Villaraigosa recommended parent and teacher budget control, better training of teachers and mayoral lobbying to get better funding, which would translate to smaller classrooms.

Both Hahn and Villaraigosa agreed that Los Angeles would be safer if working undocumented immigrants were able to obtain driver licenses, enabling them to buy automobile insurance. The mayor and councilman also agreed that the LAPD is overwhelmed to deal with immigration issues and both feel it's in the public interest to reassure immigrants their status won't be an issue in an emergency.

Later, courteous tones became adversarial as panel member Salvador Hernandez of CSUN's Daily Sundial newspaper asked Villaraigosa, a public schools proponent, why his children go to private school. Villaraigosa said his children attended public school in their early years and later changed to private school based on his

see Mayor page 2



SEVAN GHAZARYAN / VALLEY STAR
POSTERS OF PROTEST - Refurbished campus art gallery displays its first major exhibit in more than a decade; delighting students, faculty and community members.
 See story page 4

Nursing Department Draws the Line on Waiting List

By MAGGIE OWNBEY
 VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Nursing students at Valley College must wait more than a year for their applications to be next on a long waiting list.

"It was about a year until I was first accepted," said 27-year-old nursing major Maria Vaca. "I was accepted after someone

dropped the first week."

Meanwhile, California's nursing shortage intensifies as baby boomers age and the need for health care grows. Currently, the total population of registered nurses is growing at the slowest rate in 20 years, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow is a coalition of 42

nursing and health care organizations working to heighten awareness about the shortage and to encourage those who seek a career in nursing.

The waiting list policy is about to change for new applicants for the RN, LVN, or Respiratory Therapist program at Valley. The wait list has 467

see Nurse page 2

Campus Emergency Plan Stalled

■ After several years, Valley's Emergency Response Team is still under development.

By TIFFANY FARMAKIS
 DESIGN EDITOR

Valley College lacks a campus-wide emergency response plan and students worry that the school is vulnerable to an array of safety threats.

"As far as I'm aware, this campus has no definite disaster plan in case of an emergency," said psychology major Alyson Cardenas. "It's time for our administration to get on the ball on this one. Student safety should be one of their top priorities."

For two years, administrators have been struggling to develop an emergency response plan to protect its more than 18,000 students, 750,000 square feet of buildings and 105 acres of land. Many schools prepare their campuses for evacuation during terrorist threats and student violence, such as the large-scale fight that broke out at Grant High School earlier this month.

It took Valley 40 minutes to evacuate students and faculty during Valley's Sept. 13, 2001, bomb threat, according to reports from campus officials. That's four times as long as it took CSUN to evacuate students during the 1994 earthquake.

"We must have an emergency response plan and the college

see Emergency page 2

Manzano, Rodriguez Step Up

■ In the absence of a vice president, others rally to fill her shoes.

By MAGGIE OWNBEY
 VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Although it might be business as usual in the office of student services, there's no doubt that an important presence is missing. Dr. Yasmin Delahoussaye is on medical leave this semester from her duties as vice president of student services.

Delahoussaye is in charge of student services, including student discipline, mentoring and the book-loan fund.

Tino Manzano, dean of enrollment management, and Sherri Rodriguez, acting vice president of student services, are sharing Delahoussaye's job. "No one can do this alone," Manzano said. "It takes a team effort and we are fortunate that Yasmin has been able to provide that base for us."

The student services department is very fortunate to have Manzano, according to Rodriguez. She said Manzano is good at identifying issues and finding solutions; he relates

well with students, faculty and staff with his great sense of humor.

"Tino will make Yasmin proud," Rodriguez said.

Rosemary Smith, administrative secretary student services, feels the same way about Manzano, "people do relate well to him."

Everyone is stepping up, including all of the managers of the departments at student services, according to Smith, "It's what you do."

"It's hard, Dr. Delahoussaye took on a lot, things that go beyond the call of duty," said Smith, "Tino and Sherri have stepped up to a big degree; both are doing a great job."

Smith will continue to do her job and keep both Rodriguez and Manzano up to speed letting them know what's going

on. Delahoussaye's office will remain vacant until she returns to campus in the fall semester bringing back her positive attitude and warmth.

For Manzano, this is an



FILE PHOTO

Vice President of Student Services
 Yasmin Delahoussaye.

opportunity to pay back what was given to him at a time when he was in need of assistance.

"In life we are all forced to take on a variety of roles; it's time to pay it forward," he said.

NEWS REEL

JACKSON TRIAL:

A judge in the Michael Jackson case will be allowing jurors to hear testimony from Jackson's previous accusers. There are a total of 5 young males, including the one who received a \$2.4 million settlement from Jackson in 1990.

SAVING SCHIAVO:

The Rev. Jesse Jackson has joined the fight to have the brain-damaged woman's feeding tube reinserted. Doctors say Terri Schiavo, 41, is likely to die by the end of the week.

DEATH OF A LAWYER:

Famed Los Angeles attorney, Johnnie Cochran, 67, died at his home 12:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Most well known for his successful O.J. Simpson defense, Cochran suffered from an inoperable brain tumor.

CAMPUS EYE

CESAR CHAVEZ DAY:
No classes Thursday, March 31.

SCIENCE SPEAKER SERIES:
Dr. Carlton Cooper of the University of Delaware
Thursday, April 14,
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Music Room 106.

CAMPUS CONCERT SERIES:
Vatche Mankerian, piano
Thursday, April 7, 11:30 a.m. at Music Recital Hall.
Valley Symphony Orchestra
Chamber music
Sunday, April 10, 5 p.m. at Music Recital Hall.

DEAN'S RECEPTION:
Thursday, April 7, 2 p.m. at Monarch Hall

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**CAREER PLANNING
WORKSHOPS:**
Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. and
Thursdays at 1 p.m. at
Administration 126.

SPECIAL EVENTS:
UCLA Day at LAVC
Wednesday, April 6
Information Fair
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Student Workshops
1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
Admissions and Financial Aid in Monarch Hall
Teaching Career Opportunities in Foreign Language 106
Life Sciences in Foreign Language 104
Other Academic Departments in Foreign Language 100

College Majors Fair
Wednesday, April 13, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come and explore majors and transfer options in Monarch Square.

**CAREER/ TRANSFER
CENTER REPRESENTATIVE
VISITS:**
CSUs and CSUN in
Administration 126
Monday, April 4, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Monday, April 11, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday, April 12, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES:
DeVry University
Thursday, April 14, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Monarch Square

New Colors For Campus

■ Valley's changing hues are now underway throughout the entire campus.

By SUSAN MALTBY
NEWS EDITOR

Valley College's new look is out there, somewhere, under the plastic tarps and painter's tape. The exterior building painting project is underway as part of the LAVC Bond Project and, by the end of May, most departments will be sporting their fresh, earth-tone color scheme.

"Hopefully, the first phase of the painting will be complete by July 1," said project director, Mitch Vaccari. "Painting of the arcade areas over the sidewalks will be under a separate contract and bid, so that part of the project will be done within the next two to three months," said Vaccari. "The whole thing will be finished and make a nice gift for incoming students of the fall semester."

Although the painters are wearing masks to protect themselves from the paint, Vaccari

assures that the painting and fumes aren't a danger to students who stay out of the taped-off areas.

Jeanne Rubin, executive assistant to the president said it's nice to see a clean bright look. "Because of the design of the campus, the buildings serve as a backdrop to the landscape," said Rubin. "But it has been so long since they were painted that they looked cracked and dingy."

Cindy Sardo, Valley's director of public relations, issued a news memo recently, outlining the colors for the project. "Most of the campus buildings will be painted a dark cream color for the exterior stucco walls and a deep mocha color for the window treatments and surrounding borders," wrote Sardo. "We thank you for your patience as the campus undergoes this Revitalization of Valley College Painting Project."

Campus Center and Bungalow 78 will be desert

beige with deep mocha for the trimmings. The North Stadium bleachers will be painted medium beige with green and yellow colors for the scoreboard doors and other accent areas.

Eventually, the cafeteria, faculty lounge building and arcade areas will be painted as well.

The Design Review Committee is still discussing whether to paint the library because the current building is scheduled for demolition in two to three years.

Painters worked over spring break while students were out of classes. They'll be painting on weekends with Mondays and Tuesdays off to avoid disrupting classes as much as possible.

"The weather's been very good lately," said Thanos Korolis, one of the painters on the project. "We lost a couple of days because of the rain, but we're on schedule."



GREG BURMANN VALLEY STAR
BRIGHTENING UP THE PLACE- Painters apply coats of paint to the buildings on campus.

'Mayor'

continued from page 1

Catholic faith.

Hahn pointed out that his opponent often says one thing and does another. He said the councilman broke his promise and obligation to the 14th district, voted for the energy deregulation that led to the Enron fiasco.

Villaraigosa accused Hahn of corruption, alienating sections of L.A.'s population and lacking foresight.

"We need a mayor who's thinking big. This is a world-class city," said Villaraigosa.

"If anybody shows me that I condoned, allowed, suggested, directed or encouraged anybody to act unethically or to break any law, I will certainly hold

myself accountable for that," said Hahn.

Although both candidates defended themselves while simultaneously slamming their opponent, the debate lost focus and little of substance was said after the mudslinging began.

The debate's personal attacks may not change the minds of undecided L.A. voters.

One month before the March 8 primary election, almost a third of voters were undecided according to an L.A. Times poll.

Anita Valdez, 23-year-old CSUN sophomore, said the debate helped her decide how to vote.

"I don't think the debate changed anyone's mind about which candidate they're voting for," said Valdez.

'Emergency'

continued from page 1

must address this responsibility," said Lou Albert, director of staff and operational planning at Valley. "This institution has an obligation to its students, faculty, staff and the community."

Albert was the coordinator of the emergency response plan in 2003. He was able to organize Valley's first emergency response team, consisting of approximately 30 faculty and staff members.

"I ignited the spark to light the fire, to make the emergency response plan happen," he said.

Now in its final phase, Tom Jacobsmeyer, vice president of administrative services, is at the helm of the current ERP project.

In a memo issued to the campus, he stressed the need for students to become volunteer building marshals.

"These positions, along with several others, will be responsible for the management of specific areas of the campus in an event of an emergency," wrote Jacobsmeyer, who was not available for comment at press time. Administrators seem to be unclear as to why it has taken Valley two years to develop a new plan.

The original plan included procedures for mass casualties and all contingencies, including the threat of chemical and biological attacks. The Sheriff's Department designated certain school lots and buildings as evacuation zones and a triage center, while the gymnasium would be used as a temporary morgue.

Identification of teams, and training is scheduled for completion sometime in May. The emergency preparedness team will schedule drills coordinated with the Los Angeles City fire and police departments.

"We should have a safety plan on campus that makes sense for our faculty, staff and students," said Valley President Tyree Wieder. "The college council requested that we get moving on this. We do have an emergency response team that's been organizing and putting a plan together to present to the council."

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FOR THE RECORD

In last week's article, "The Saint Behind the Holiday," St. Patrick was incorrectly stated as being neither Irish nor Catholic. The saint converted to Catholicism.

In the article, "High School Riot Closes Child Development Center," the percentages used to describe Grant High School's student body were based on language, not ethnicity

AN' WHEN YER SMASHIN' TA' STATE, KIDS...DON'T FERGIT T' KEEP A SMILE ON YER LIPS AN' A SONG IN YER HEART!

MADE IN L.A. - THE POSTERS OF PEACE PRESS

Panel Discussion, Art building Room 103
Ethics and Design, Thursday, May 5
7:00 - 8:30 PM

Gallery Hours:
Monday - Thursday 11:00 AM - 2: PM & 7:00 - 9:00 PM
Saturdays 2:00 - 5:00PM (Closed Sundays & school holidays)

Please call 818-778-5536, in advance for additional open times, group tours, disability accommodation, additional events, and/or schedule changes.

The Art Gallery is located in the Art Building, Campus Drive,
Los Angeles Valley College, 5800 Fulton Avenue, Valley Glen, California, 91401-4096
www.lavc.edu

Enter Campus Drive from Oxnard Street. Park in Lot C, adjacent to the Art building (Wheelchair accessible from the west side of the Art Building.)

Exit the 170 Freeway at Oxnard and go west. Exit the 101 Freeway at Coldwater Canyon, go north to Oxnard and turn left.

Exhibition co-curated by Henry Klein, Carol Wells, Irene Wolf, and Bob Zaugh.

This exhibition has been made possible by a grant from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department and individual contributors.

Los Angeles Valley College
and the Center for the Study of Political Graphics
invite you to

MADE IN LA - THE POSTERS OF PEACE PRESS
March 12 - May 5 2005
Art Gallery, Art Building, Los Angeles Valley College

CAMPUS CRIME
Officer
Assaulted

By TIFFANY FARMAKIS
DESIGN EDITOR

Police Battery

An officer sustained minor injuries during a routine campus check at 10:35 p.m. March 16. Officers approached three white males observed loitering in parking lot A.

As campus police insisted they leave, the suspects became belligerent. Officers then apprehended the three suspects at gunpoint and called for back-up. When back-up arrived, one suspect became combative, striking one officer in the chest and face.

Two suspects were apprehended and released without incident. The combative suspect was taken to the West Hollywood station and charged with battery.

Hit and Run

A female student discovered her car was sideswiped March 8. The car was parked in Lot D between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. When she returned to her car, the victim noticed damage to the front passenger side fender and bumper.

There were no witnesses.

Valley College Sheriff's Department asks anyone with information about these incidents please call the department at (818) 947-2911.

The Valley Star is published by students of the Journalism and Photography classes as a learning experience, offered under the college journalism instructional program. Editorial and Advertising Offices are located at 5800 Fulton Avenue, Valley Glen, CA 91401, (818) 947-2576. Under appropriate state and federal court decisions these materials are free from prior restraint by virtue of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Materials published herein, including any opinions expressed and advertisements should not be interpreted as the position of the Los Angeles Community College District, the college, or any office or employee thereof. Editorials are the opinion of the editorial board only and do not necessarily represent those of the entire staff. Columns are the opinion of the writer. Letters are the opinions of the reader.

OPINION

3

Forbidden Fruit Tastes Like Bitter Grapes

■ Universities say teacher/student liaisons may blossom, but blooming is prohibited.

BY SUSAN MALTBY
NEWS EDITOR

Maybe it feels like there isn't enough love in the world, but when you're a college student who's hot for teacher, romance may be out of the question.

On California college campuses, instructors who get involved with students can face serious reprimands from their employers ranging from censure to dismissal.

These employer policies against personal relationships are unconstitutional and should be repealed.

The recent case of UCLA's Adolfo Bermeo, vice provost of diversity, shows how unfair such relationship-banning policies can be. Bermeo must face sanctions, without any evidence of wrongful behavior, based solely on a relationship he had with one of his Chicano studies students.

In response, the UC Board of Regents recently amended its system-wide policy to prohibit faculty from having romantic or sexual relationships with any student for whom a faculty member has, or should reasonably expect to have in the future, academic responsibility (including instructional, evaluative, or supervisory).

Its ban includes consensual relationships.

Apparently, California universities are against the age-old pairing of master and apprentice, professor and pupil or scholar and "shaboinken," no

matter the circumstances.

Of course it wouldn't be good to have a scourge of scorned lovers crying foul and dragging teachers and schools into courtrooms, but doesn't an individual's right to privacy supersede an institution's desire to minimize the possible risk of lawsuits?

Sure, we need to make certain that professors don't unfairly alter grades or sexually harass students, but colleges can't become morality police.

Since when does any employer have the right to dictate an employee's dating life?

With the exception of pimps and hoes, there is absolutely no job that requires the boss's supervision in the bedroom.

Unlike the UC Regent Reich, human rights and student/instructor dating options aren't completely restricted at Valley College.

According to Valley's Policy Compliance Officer Kay Divine, the policy prohibits "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment." It prohibits sexual harassment as defined by the policy or state or federal law.

A consensual relationship between a student and instructor is discouraged but not prohibited.

Unlike the official UC policy, the teachers' guide suggests a flexible, case-by-case

approach to evaluating faculty-student romances.

Regulations against relationships between consenting adults are invasive, flawed and overstep their boundaries.

Professors guilty of sexual harassment or unfair grading should be investigated and punished. Barring any wrongdoing, two consenting adults are guaranteed the right to conduct their personal lives with privacy.

College administrators can keep their eyes on what goes on in the classroom, but no employer needs to have authority to control private beds, baths or beyond.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

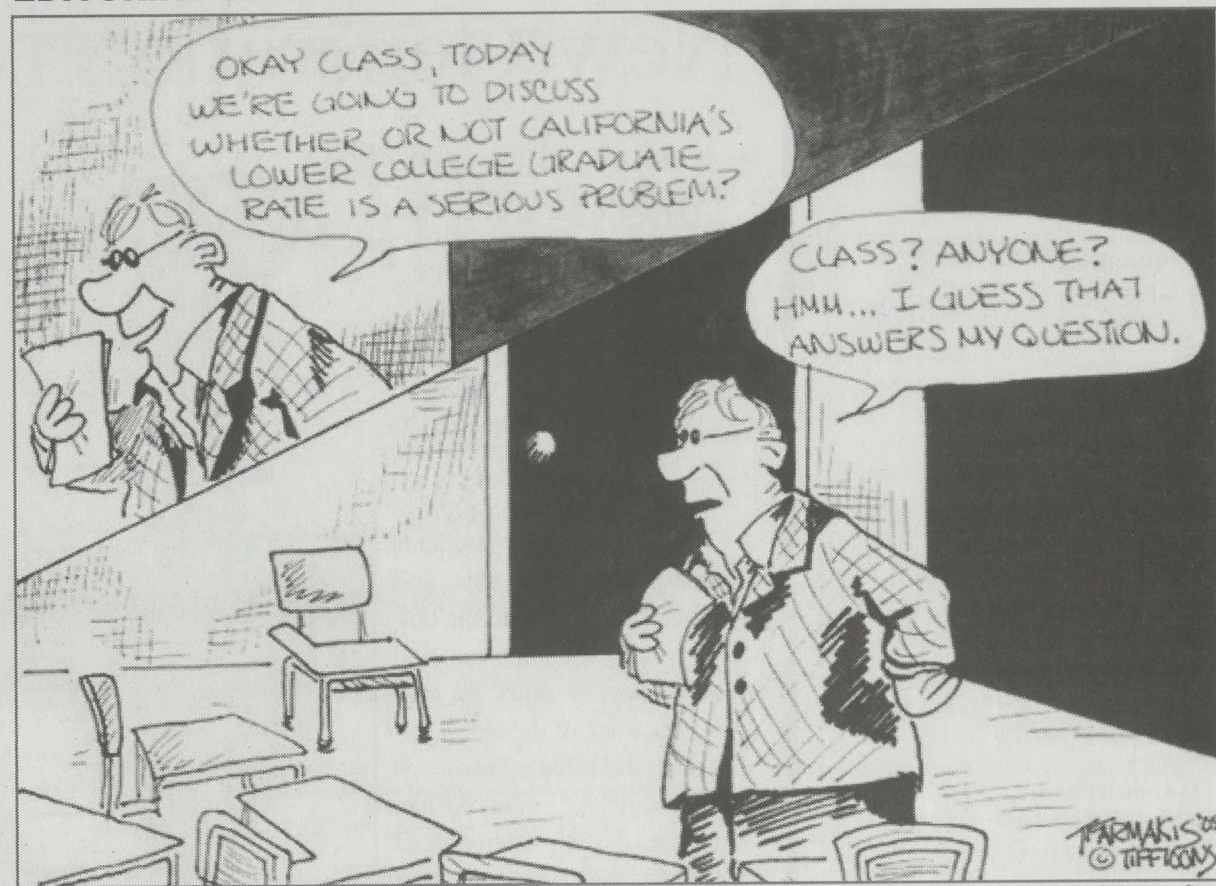


ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS / VALLEY STAR

One Step Closer to Going Down the Aisle

BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS
DESIGN EDITOR

American society has seen the dawn of many necessary changes throughout its 200-year history. A move toward civil rights for blacks, then women's voting and reproductive rights; anti-discrimination battles on behalf of minorities, women, the physically disabled and gays.

For the most part.

One battle has yet to be won: a person's right to wed whomever they happen to fall in love with. Out of the 50 states in this country, only Massachusetts recognizes same-sex marriages. Where in the Constitution or Bill of Rights does it state that heterosexuals have the right to

decide how gays and lesbians should live? The inclusion of gay men and lesbian women in marriage holds them to equal standards, not separate ones.

It's alarming that so many people are persistent in believing that separate can be equal.

One of the main intentions of the U.S. and California constitutions is to protect minorities from the tyranny of the majority which is why I applaud Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer's ruling which states that barring same-sex couples from the many rights connected to marriage is discriminatory.

"The historical definition of marriage," Kramer said, "cannot justify the denial of equal protection to gays and lesbians."

California has traditionally been a front-runner in dis-

mantling discrimination and although this is a small step for gay equality, the effort has a long way to go.

Kramer has argued that forbidding same-sex marriage is gender discrimination. However, the real argument here is that gays and lesbians are the classic example of a group that needs constitutional protection from the majority dictators.

In the last election, voters in 11 states passed measures banning gay marriage and civil unions. Even our own president backs an amendment to the Constitution defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

Opponents of Kramer's decision are denouncing the ruling as judicial activism. They point out that the authors who

wrote about guaranteeing "equal protection of the law" in the U.S. and California constitutions never entertained the possibility of gay marriage, let alone making it a constitutionally guaranteed right.

Times have changed and our society is evolving. The "equal protection" words exist in our constitution for a reason and are free to be used by all American citizens regardless of their sexual orientations.

There is no reason one should assume that the Constitution's framers would disagree with that analysis if they lived in today's society.

I hope we will not regress by giving into the irrationally reactive opponents of equal rights. To do so would be nothing short of bigotry.

CampusView

Should students and teachers be allowed to date?

PHOTOS AND TEXT
BY DANIEL
VILLASENOR

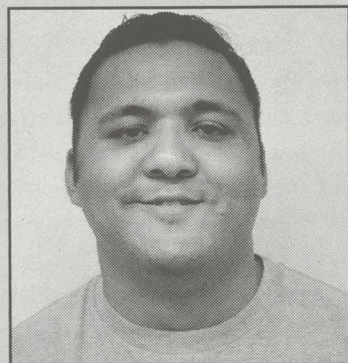


"No, it's just not right."

-Elizabeth Zamora
Media arts major

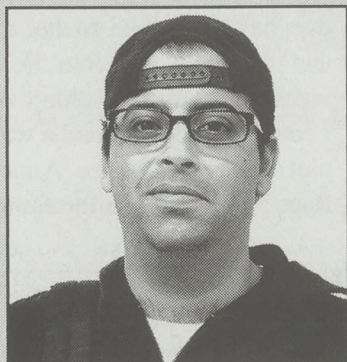
"Yes, as long as they are not in the same class."

-Eduardo Gutierrez
Business major



"No, because it's very controversial."

-Albert M. Salazar
Film/media arts major



"No, because teachers are older."

-Nare
Cinema arts major



ALL THE NEWS THAT GIVES US FITS

Emergency Response But Only If They're Not Busy

■ 911 services are just not cutting it these days.

BY KATHARINE ANDERSON
MANAGING EDITOR

Most of us are taught at a very young age how to handle emergencies: dial 911. Help will be on the way immediately, right?

Wrong.

Today if you dial 911, you will probably be put on hold.

Just last week, I called 911 to request help for an injured motorist. My hold time exceeded three minutes.

All I could think, while holding, was thank goodness I am not being murdered. Three minutes is an eternity to someone being attacked.

Then I began to ponder what I would do if I was faced with a life-threatening emergency. Different scenarios ran through my mind — and not one of them involved calling 911.

I want to live — not hold.

According to the Los Angeles Fire Department's website, "Calls to 911 should only be used when a true emergency exists. Non-emergency calls to 911 can create delays in handling other very serious emergencies that require immediate assistance."

No kidding.

So, what's the problem?

Simple. Too many people call 911 when Fluffy is stuck in a tree.

It would be funny if it wasn't true. 911-abusers endanger other people. They delay life-saving, professional help.

When seconds matter, we can feel better knowing that John Doe knows what time it is, thanks to a 911 operator.

In 1998, a solution was implemented to curb the excessive abuse of 911. Callers can dial 311 for the Citywide Services Directory. This number can assist callers with any non-emergency city services, including the fire department for Fluffy.

Although, one problem with 311 is painfully clear. How many people actually know about it?

Four out of five people asked did not even know it existed. And the one person who did thought it wasn't even in service yet.

How can people call it if they don't know about it?

The city needs to take the time to educate its residents. Create billboards and bus bench signs. Even better, while on hold for 911, a message could direct callers to call 311.

People's lives may depend on it.

WE'RE NOT PSYCHIC

So tell us what's on your mind! Contact The Valley Star at thevalleystar@yahoo.com or call (818) 947-2576.

Letters should be limited to 300 words and may be edited for publication.

Letters to the Editor

I used to think that joining the ASU Executive Board would best fulfill my vision and passion for making a difference at Valley College. Initially, I was naïve and inexperienced in the works of this institution. It is with great disappointment that I report that the ASU is not doing what it purports to do; currently ASU is an instrument in the hands of its advisor and her immediate boss(es). If it doesn't serve the needs of Student Services and mistakenly attempts to serve the students, its president will face a vote of no confidence.

It's no secret that the ASU is failing Valley students. It's apparent in the events organized and advocated by this body. On average, less than 0.5 percent of 17,000 students partake in activities arranged by the ASU. A more shameful example is that our student body wasn't informed of the ASU-sponsored Halloween Dance last semester until the Valley Star published an article the following day. A vast majority of the students are not informed about important upcoming events because of lack of publicity.

The ASU body is so anxious to rid itself of its own ineffectiveness that it goes to great lengths to place blame on one individual, ASU president, Levon Bagramian. He has wholly fulfilled his duties and has been the target for destruction ever since last year's election results were released. The president is not at fault. The structure and those who have been in their offices for years are to be faulted with the failures of this organization.

I think it takes a weak and hypocritical body to blame the flawed and decomposing organization's failures on one person.

And finally, how is the president to work and lead in an atmosphere, where there is so much animosity? Leadership cannot be nurtured and cultivated in this type of environment. In these circumstances, anyone would find himself/herself in the same situation that Bagramian is in today.

The problems of ASU at Valley have deep roots that need to be addressed with care and dedication. However, it would be completely inefficient to dedicate our energy on the wrong solution. Changing the president will not change the facts. We need to look below the surface, recognize our own faults and work toward improving the structure. Otherwise our approach will be like giving Tylenol to a cancer patient.

Sincerely,
Nelli Martirosyan

Dear Editor:

If a healthy majority of the ASU has determined Levon Bagramian to be dead wood and have demanded his resignation, why in the world is it left to Bagramian to decide whether or not he'll go? Is the ASU presidency a monarchy?

And on such an important matter as this, perhaps the entire

student body ought to be allowed to vote, so that we may express our displeasure as well. I mean, why should the ASU Executive Board have all the fun.

Sincerely,
Erin Noble, returning student
Valley College Theater major

WEDNESDAY
TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, March 30

"Beauty Shop"Film Release
Queen Latifah
Dir: Billie Woodruff
Comedy

Thursday, March 31

Ryan Cabrera7 p.m.
Willem LG
\$30

Friday, April 1

**LAVC Theatre Dept. Presents:
Chicago the Musical**Dir: Pete Parkin
8p.m.
Mainstage Theatre
April 1 & 2 and 8 & 9
\$15 General Admission
\$10 Students
Reservations: (818) 947-2790100.3 The Beat--Birthday Bash
15 years of hip hop and rap
scheduled to appear: Warren G,
112, Fantasia, xscape
8:15p.m.
\$15-\$125**"Sin city"**Film Release
Dir: Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez
Special Guest Dir:
Quentin Tarantino
Elijah Wood, Benicio del Toro
Jessica Alba, Bruce Willis
Drama

Saturday, April 2

**LA PHIL: World Music
Kronos Quartet and Zrihan**
8 p.m.
Walt Disney Concert Hall
\$25-\$80**Jessye Norman**
8 p.m.
Royce Hall-UCLA
\$65-\$112

Sunday, April 3

Angels in America
Tony Kushner's
Tony & Pulitzer prize winning play
continues through April 10
Part 1: Friday 7:30p.m.
Sunday 1:30p.m.
Part 2: Saturday 7:30p.m.
Sunday 7p.m.
\$25

Monday, April 4

Metal Skool
9 p.m.
The Roxy, Hollywood
\$12.50**The Jimmy Chamberlin Complex**
(Featuring Jimmy Chamberlin)
formerly of the Smashing Pumpkins
8p.m.
The Troubadour
\$12

Tuesday, April 5

U2
The Kings of Leon.
7:30 p.m.
Staples Center
\$51.25-\$171
April 5 & 6**The Bodeans**
8 p.m.
Roxy Theatre Sunset
\$22.50**Dizzee Rascal**
9 p.m.
El Rey Theatre
\$18**Made in L.A.--
The Posters of Peace Press**Exhibit continues through May 5
Art Gallery, Art Building
Gallery Hours:
Monday to Thursday
11a.m. to 2 p.m.
7-9 p.m.
Saturday: 2 to 5 p.m.

Next Wednesday, April 6

ASU presents:
'A Wave of Relief'
Tsunami Relief Fund Raiser
Monarch Square
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

New Generation Hooked on Hookah

■ Hookah pipes are a rising trend taking hold of the Valley and for many, it's more than just smoke and mirrors.

BY ANNA GOLDBERG
STAFF WRITER

Valley College students stressing out over tests and whether they'll get into the university of their choice can find a legal way to relax as they experience one of the oldest traditions in the Middle East.

"I love it," says Armen Akopyan, 21, an International Trade student at Valley. "It's all about the flavored tobacco. It makes you calm and dizzy if you smoke enough of it."

The Up in Smoke lounge in Sherman Oaks has only been puffing for four months but has quickly been growing in popularity. On a typical Friday night it caters to about 300 visitors, many of whom are Valley students.

So what makes students pack hookah cafes weekend after weekend?

"People are attracted to the mystic of it," says "Joseph", owner of Up in Smoke Hookah Lounge on Ventura Boulevard. "They can come here and relax, listen to music and socialize."

Originating in India, where it was made out of coconut shells, the smoking of hookah, also known as 'nargile' in the



SEVAN GHAZARYAN / VALLEY STAR

HOOK IT UP- Great flavor and increasing popularity is attracting students to smoke shops around the city.

Middle East, spread throughout the Arab world and later took root in Turkey. Once there, it was revolutionized into what is known as hookah or water pipes today.

The preferred mix, 30 percent tobacco, 70 percent dried fruit with molasses and/or honey comes pre-mixed, is heated up by hot coals and is smoked through a tube and water. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!

Although you must be at least 18-years-old to do it, hookah-smoking has become popular enough that Up in Smoke is not the only hookah bar that can be found in the San

Fernando Valley. With The Spot in the Encino Town Center and Gitana, in Burbank, which also offers upscale dining, it's easy to find one to suit your tastes.

"It's a great place to hang out with your friends," says Paula Crisostomo, 21-year-old Nursing student at Valley whose favorite tobacco flavors are strawberry and peach. "There is music, talking, food, and of course smoking hookah. We sit around trying to make rings out of the smoke."

But despite it's growing popularity, some health officials worry about the health issues that might come from extensive

use of hookah.

"Water pipe smoking may be associated with significant health risks, and we only now are beginning to accumulate information on the issue," Thomas Eissenberg, head of the Clinical Behavioral Pharmacology Laboratory at Virginia Commonwealth University in a statement he gave to MedicineNet.com

Still the relaxing environment that offers a taste of a fascinating culture continues to draw new users to release the stresses of the day one puff at a time.

Political Parallels

BY SUSAN MALTBY
NEWS EDITOR

For the generation that lived through one of the most rebellious and tumultuous decades in recent American history, there's a quality of nostalgia at MADE IN L.A. — The Posters of the Peace Press, the latest exhibition showing now through May 5 at the Valley College Art Gallery. For today's students, captivating graphics, anti-Vietnam War posters and outspoken political messages highlight a movement forged in Los Angeles during the dynamic era of the '60s and '70s.

"It's déjà vu," said Henry Klein, art gallery director. "The Vietnam War and its expansion was predicated on lies — just like the war in Iraq today," said Klein. "This exhibit is a significant piece of history."

Dennis Reed, dean of fine and performing arts at Valley, said he's pleased with the refurbished art gallery, Valley's first completed bond project.

"The re-opening of the art gallery marks a renewed opportunity for this campus to bring art to students and the community," said Reed. "It's a chance to finally see some project results. This gallery is a serviceable and handsome space."

MADE IN L.A. — The Posters of the Peace Press is Valley's first major exhibit in 15 years. Cindy Sardo, director of public relations, said that the new gallery facility with updated lighting, ceiling and state-of-the-art security system marks the first phase of a plan that also includes future renovations and refurbishments to the courtyard and reception area. Sardo says that although the

current gallery show has a political slant, it is an opportunity for learning.

"It's a real quick overview for younger folks who may not know the mood and feeling of the Nixon and Vietnam eras," said Sardo. "It covers Angela Davis, who spoke here at Valley, and presents a flavor of '60s music."

Three years in the making, this exhibit was made possible in part by more than \$17,500 in grant money from the City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, Valley's Patron's Association and the Richard K. Nystrom fund.

The Peace Press, founded in 1967 by Students for a Democratic Society, mainly UCLA undergraduate students, was formed in response to current political events. With a point of view that was in 180-degree opposition to the U.S. government, it wasn't easy to share alternative ideas.

"It was difficult to get printed," explained Klein, who has taught and worked at Valley since 1977. "Often, even sympathetic printers would be visited by the LAPD or fire officials who would threaten them with fire violations. Landlords would feel pressured and printers would have to change locations," said Klein. "The Peace Press changed locations 13-15 times in their first three years."

MADE IN L.A. — The Posters of the Peace Press is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturdays 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. closing night, May 5 from 7-8:30 p.m. For more information contact the gallery at (818) 778-5536.

CONCERT REVIEW

Elmo Meets Rock

BY WILLIAM HINES
STAFF WRITER

Imagine, as you learned to do by watching Sesame Street, you are in a bar around 1 a.m. You see a band setting up its instruments on stage, getting ready to play a set, and as they go into their first song, you notice that it sounds like the theme from ... the "Muppet Show," only, they're singing, "...The Dead Henson's show tonight!" Snap!

The Dead Hensons, whose name is a play on punk band, The Dead Kennedys, is an eight-piece band from Oakland that covers everything from the song you sang in the tub when you were too young to care about being naked, "Rubber Duckie," to the song that helped ease you into the first day of school while teaching you how to count, "The Count's First Day of School," and a song about rainbows before they were synony-

mous with homosexuality in your mind, "Rainbow Connection."

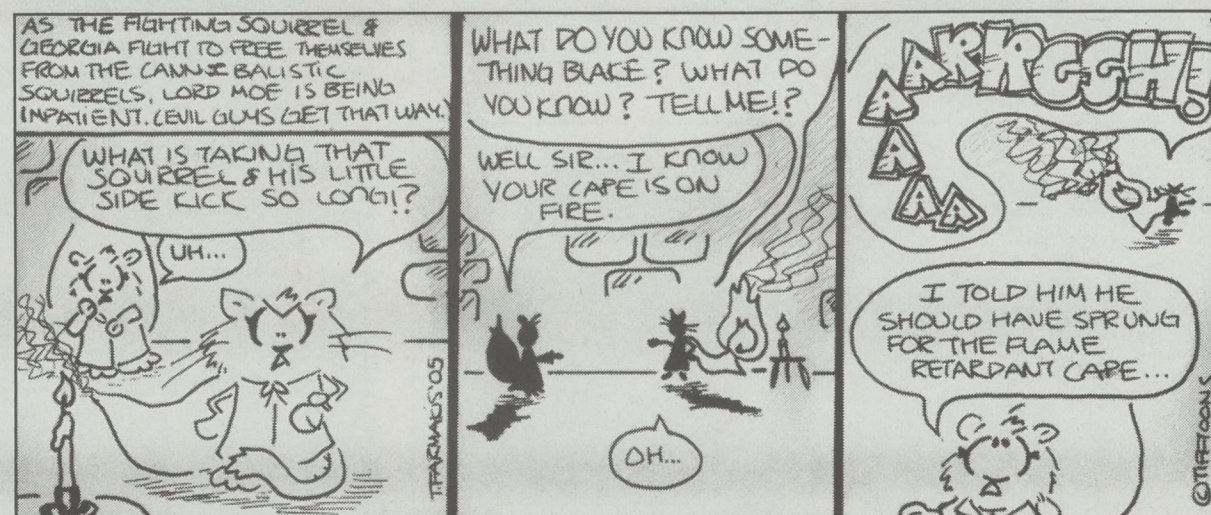
I got the chance to catch them at the Derby Friday night.

The band played all their signature covers perfectly, pumping up the audience. People sang, drank and danced with each other, feeling like kids again. It was like a fountain of youth for everyone there.

There were, of course, a few people there that were, "too cool for school" and thought that the show was "gay" or "too silly," but the most crass person I knew at the show that night said the next day, "Dude, I woke up this morning, and I had those songs stuck in my head! Last night was so much fun!"

All I'm saying is, if you think you can let go of your cool self-image, go to www.deadhensons.com and pick up their 7-inch vinyl. Otherwise, in the words of Oscar the Grouch, "Phooey!"

FIGHT LIKE A SQUIRREL



TIFFANY FARMARKS / VALLEY STAR

Tinsel
Town
MadnessBY LAGINA PHILLIPS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Hollywood is in a frenzy these days, with the OC's lesbian plot twist drawing viewers in and American Idol's numeric foul-up leaving audiences asking if the once top show is losing its magic, everybody in tinsel town is fighting for the spotlight.

We present to you the best and worst in recent entertainment: **Best**

Kirstie Alley's cable show "Fat Actress" is causing an uproar in Hollywood, with critics split straight down the middle. While some are outraged by the Showtime hit, calling it too risqué, while others praise Alley's audacity to take on tinsel town as a plus-sized comedian.

One of reality TV's lesser known gems, the all-too-addicting Animal Planet's "Pet Star," aired its season finale last week. An underrated show that invites pets and their owners to compete for cash, the show, with contestants more talented than the show's host Mario Lopez, is gaining popularity.

The new videogame obsession is the PSP (Play Station Portable). Being called the "sexiest device since the iPod" by the NY Times, the gizmo plays music, takes photos and of course there's the video game element that draws in players of all ages.

Worst

Recently acquitted from murder charges, ending a four-year legal battle, actor Robert Blake is searching for work. Most believe the 71-year-old actor is going to be hard-pressed to find a role, noting that he wasn't exactly a hot commodity before his court-room fiasco. Blake, however, remains desperate ... I mean optimistic.

With the release of "Miss Congeniality," underrated actress Regina King plays second fiddle yet again. King may be considered a good-luck charm, after playing opposite Jaime Foxx in "Ray" and Cuba Gooding Jr. in "Jerry Maguire" her leading men each scored Oscars, while King's mantel remains bare. King even played a supporting role in teen pop idol Hilary Duff's flick, "A Cinderella Story."

"Survivor" alumni Rob and Amber are now tormenting fellow contestants on the "Amazing Race." The CBS reality show has long been known for its class among a large pool of sleazy reality shows, but the dubious duo have managed to lie, cheat and steal their way into the lead week after week. "I didn't think I could do it but I found a way to plot and scheme on the 'Amazing Race,'" Rob said on the show.

NEWS

5



SCOTT MITCHELL / SPECIAL TO THE STAR
DIE HARD DETERMINATION - Monarch center fielder Brecken Bronner dives through the center field fence in a valiant effort to catch a home run ball during the second game of a double header against Bakersfield at home on Thursday.

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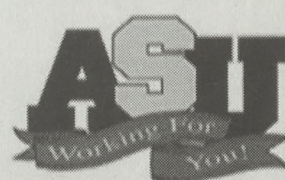
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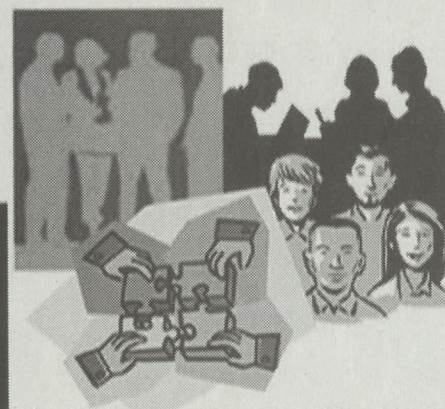
NEWS SPORTS VALLEY LIFE OPINION

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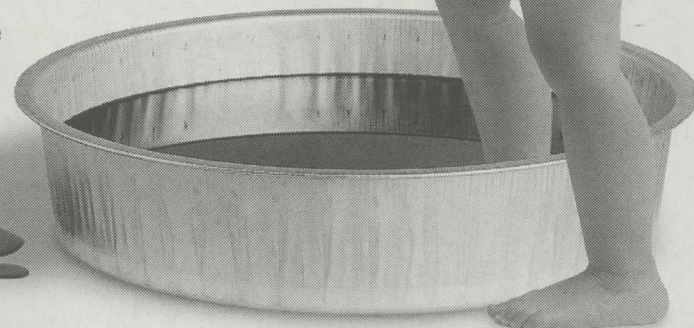
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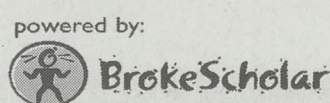


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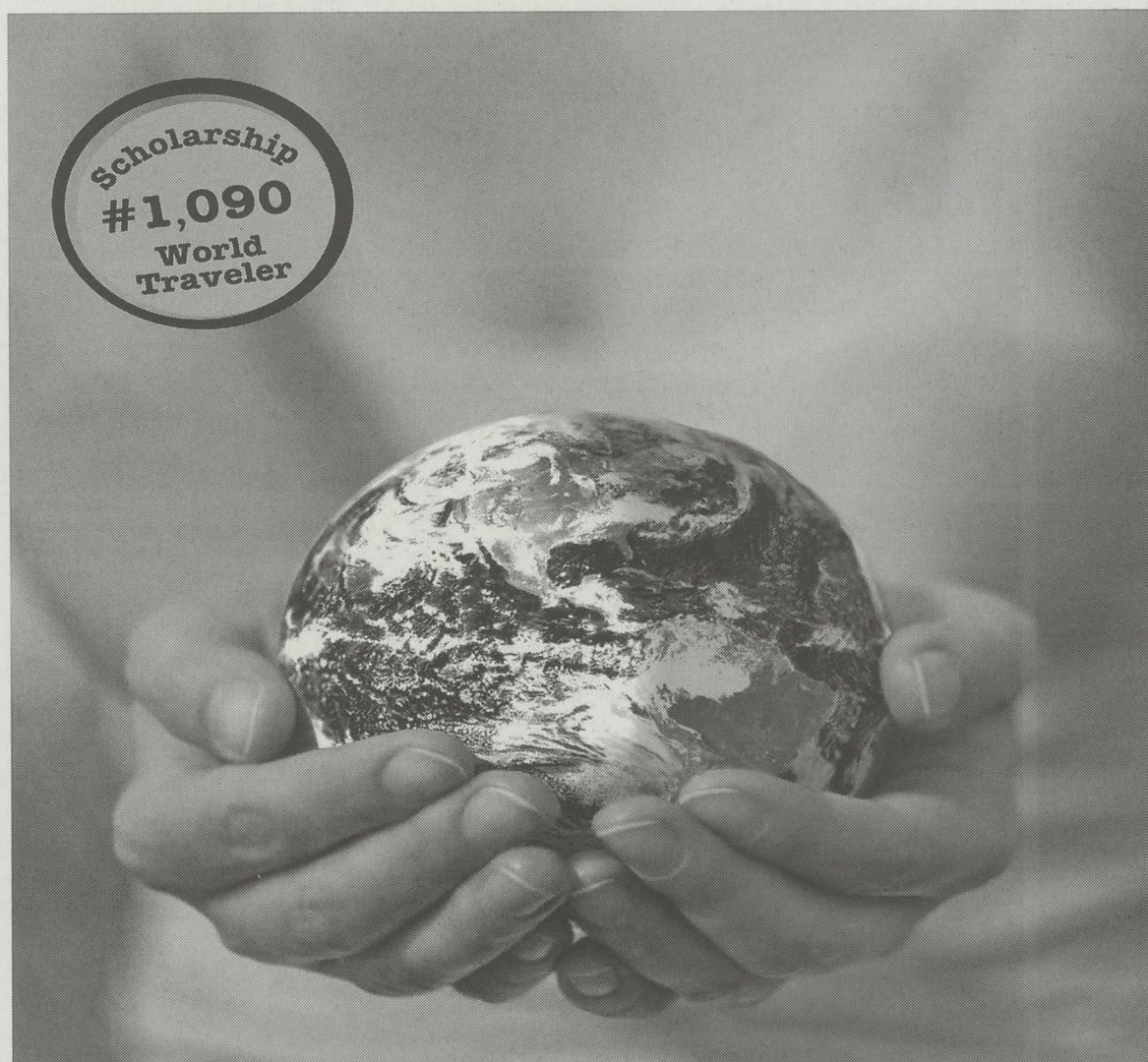


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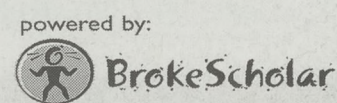


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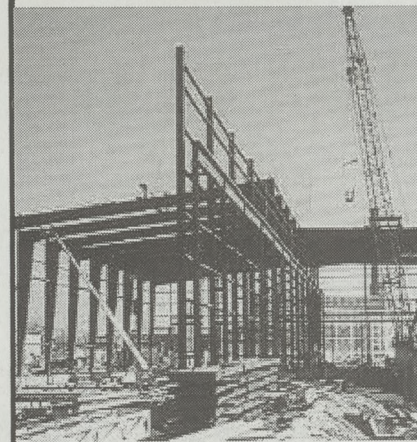
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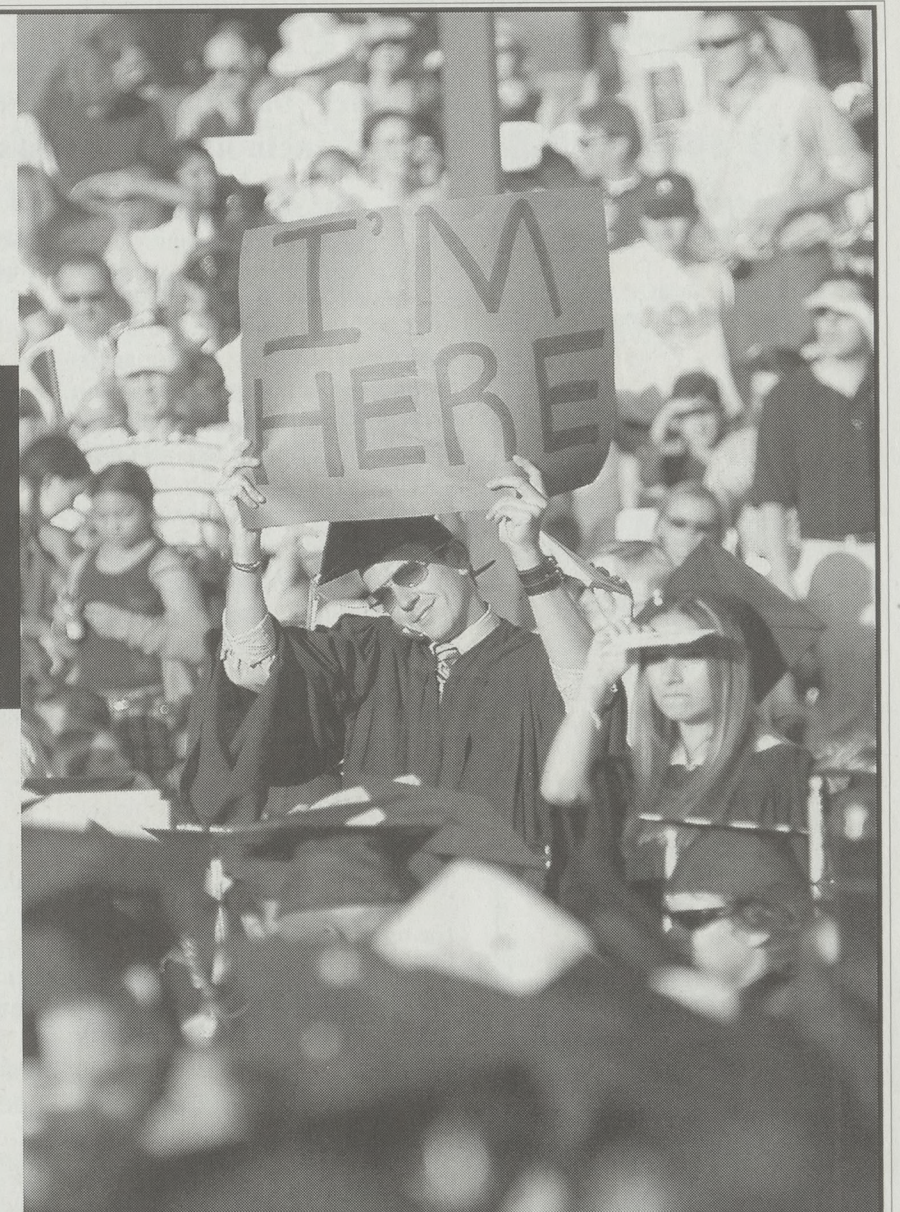
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Stars of the Week

Baseball

Eddie Baeza
Pitched a complete game, gave up 5 runs, surrendered 1 walk, and struck out 9 batters.

Track & Field

Jeremy Evans (Shot Put)
He placed third with a throw of 41 feet.

Marques Reyes (Pole Vault)
He placed first with a vault of 14 feet.

Antoinette Burton (High Jump)
She placed first with a jump of 5 feet.

Jenny Portillo (Pole Vault)
She broke the school record with vault 9 feet and 8 inches.

Baseball

Matt Alberti
He won the 200-meter invitational relay and the 200-meter backstroke.

Valentine Alberti
She won the 50-, 100-, and 500-meter freestyle.

Megan Winchell
She qualified for the state meet in 100-yard freestyle.

LAVC SCORES

Softball vs. College of Canyons (L 14-2) 3/29/05
Softball Record: 16-6-1, 7-4

Baseball vs. Santa Ana (W 6-5) 3/24/05
Baseball Record: 11-13, 5-5

Men

Swimming vs. Cuesta (L 161-82) 3/24/05
Softball Record: 1-2

Women

Swimming vs. Cuesta (L 138-89) 3/24/05
Softball Record: 0-3

LAVC SCHEDULE

Wednesday 3/30/05
Swimming vs Citrus 2:00 p.m.

Thursday 3/31/05
Softball @ Glendale 1:00 p.m.
Baseball vs Canyons 2:00 p.m.

Friday 4/1/05
Softball @ Fullerton 3:00 p.m.
Swimming @ Canyons 2:30 p.m.
Track & Field @ West L.A. 2:00 p.m.

Saturday 4/2/05
Baseball @ Canyons 1:00 p.m.

Sunday 4/3/05
No Scheduled Games

Monday 4/4/05
No Scheduled Games

Tuesday 4/5/05
No Scheduled Games

Wednesday 4/6/05
No Scheduled Games

PRO SCORES

NBA

Orlando def. Atlanta (109-102)

Dallas def. Detroit (95-88)

Indiana def. Milwaukee (90-76)

New Jersey def. Charlotte (95-91) OT

Houston def. Utah (99-85)

Phoenix def. Denver (123-114)

Washington def. Portland (114-106)

Sacramento def. Philadelphia (118-109)



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The Lady Monarchs Failed to Stop Renegades

■ The Lady Monarchs fell short in their two games against the Bakersfield Renegades Thursday.



SCOTT MITCHELL / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

CAUGHT RED HANDED - Monarch 3rd baseman Barbara Rejuengo blocks the bag and tags out a Bakersfield batter in the second game of a double header at home on Thursday, March 24.

BY ZABIE MANSOORY
SPORTS EDITOR

The Lady Monarchs failed to stop the Bakersfield Renegades despite the team's great defense. The Monarchs lost 3-1 and 8-2 during the double-header home match on Thursday.

"Our bats were a little off," said Head Coach Frankie Garcia. "They are not an easy team, we had only seven hits."

While their bats weren't on,

the Lady Monarchs' defense stepped up and helped pitcher Pauline Morquecho limit the opposition to three runs in the first game. The Lady Monarchs scored once.

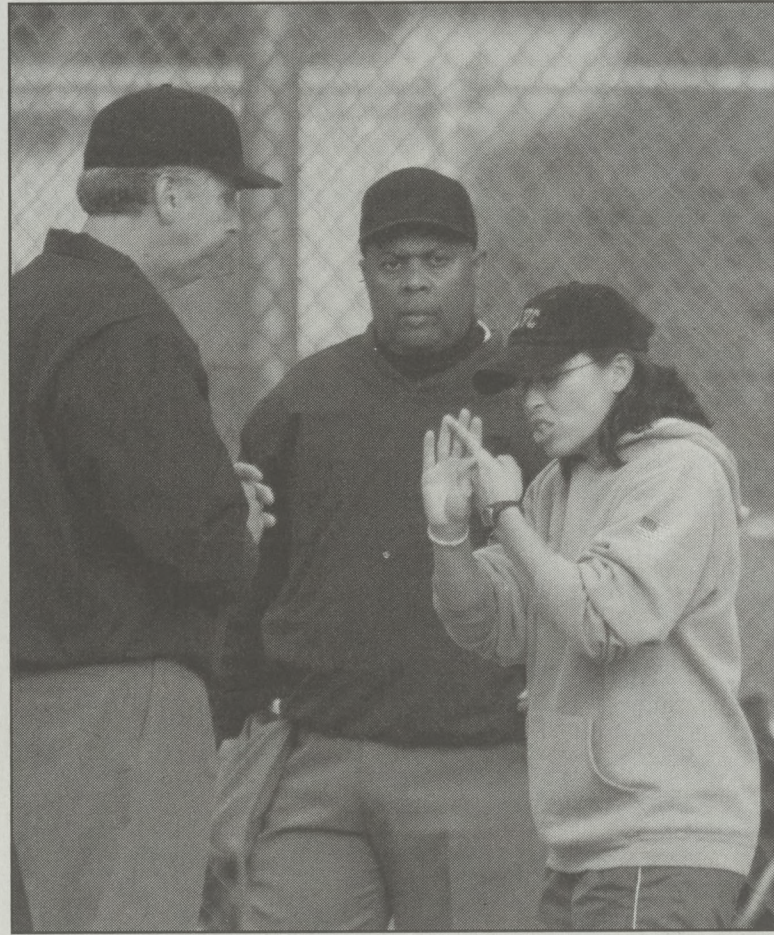
"Our bats were a little off ... they are not an easy team, we had only seven hits."

"We weren't up to hitting

today," said first baseman Barbara Reguengo. "It just didn't happen to us."

The Renegades more than doubled their run total in the second game by scoring eight runs to Valley's two.

The Monarchs lost more than two games last week after Morquecho was ejected from the second game and suspended for one game. Morquecho was kicked out of the game as she tried to get the baseman off her



GREG BURMANN / VALLEY STAR

LETTING THEM HAVE IT - Monarch Head Coach Frankie Garcia disputes the ejection of pitcher Pauline Morquecho on Thursday.

when the Bakersfield first baseman was sitting on her.

"I have never seen anything like that during my all coaching career."

"I don't know what happened," said Morquecho. "I don't even know what I did."

"That was a very strange

call," said Coach Garcia. "I have never seen anything like that during my all coaching career."

Amanda Salazar, who pitched most of the second game, allowed five runs during the fourth inning.

The Lady Monarchs will face Glendale College on Thursday at 1 p.m. at home just a game before they head to their bye week.

Baseball Victorious Over Santa Ana

■ Valley baseball finishes road trip with a 1-2 record, including a big win over Santa Ana.

BY SAM HAHN
STAFF WRITER

SANTAANA-After losing its first two games at the Fullerton tournament, the Monarchs bounced back with a 6-5 win over the third-ranked Santa Ana Dons and brought their overall record to 11-12 with the victory.

"This was a really big game for us," said Head Coach Dave Mallas. "To come in here and finish off the week with a win over a team like [Santa Ana] is huge."

Mallas attributed the win to the performance of sophomore Eddie Baeza, who pitched a complete game in Thursday's win.

"[Baeza] really stepped it up for us today," explained Mallas. "He went out there and got us a much-needed win."

The Monarchs quickly jumped on Dons' freshman pitcher Matthew Freeman and scored four runs in the first inning.

The Dons tied the game in the seventh inning as Baeza gave up a solo home run to sophomore first baseman Rick Taloa. Santa Ana added to the lead as sophomore outfielders C. J. Rice and DH Tyler Greer reached base on singles.

Freshman third baseman Brett Siegmund scored Rice on an RBI single and the Dons tied the game as pinch runner Matt Davidson scored as Siegmund was caught in a rundown between first and second base.

Valley retook the lead at the top of the ninth as freshman right fielder Josh Cliffords scored on freshman second baseman Chris Cervantes' single. The Monarchs

added to their lead as Cervantes scored on a single hit by center-fielder Derek Walker.

Even though the Monarchs finished with a 1-2 record at the tournament, the team remains very optimistic.

"It's been an up-and-down season for us so far."

"It's been an up-and-down season for us so far," said Mallas. "I'm hoping that we learn from this game and carry this winning attitude with us the rest of the way."

"Overall, I'm happy with our performance at the tournament," said sophomore right fielder DJ Lewis. "Even though we only won one game this week, we beat one of the best teams in the state."

"The tournament made us a better team," said sophomore pitcher Jorge Olmedo. "Because of our win against [Santa Ana], the second half of the season is going to go very well."

"Our biggest problem right now is consistency," said Mallas. "One day we'll play very well and the next we'll come out flat."

"We have to deal with our inconsistency," said Mallas. "But, if you'd told me at the beginning of the season that we would be 11-12 in our first 23 games, I'd take it. We're working hard to be successful it's hard turning around a team that finished 1-24 just a season before, so we're doing fine."

The Monarchs will resume play March 31 as Valley takes on conference rival College of the Canyons at 2 p.m.

Baeza Aims to Bring Respect

■ Sophomore excels on the mound and in the field.

BY SAM HAHN
STAFF WRITER

On a crisp morning back in 1988, Eddie Baeza's mother introduced her 4-year-old son to baseball and 15 years later, he's striking fear into the hearts of opposing teams at Valley College.

The Monarchs hosted the Glendale College Vaqueros two weeks ago and Baeza collected three hits and drove in four runs as Valley destroyed Glendale 30-5. This, after coming off a six-inning, one-hit game that Baeza pitched just two days before.

Baeza, a starting pitcher and right-fielder for the Monarchs is flexing a .345 batting average with 18 RBIs in 16 games. He has a 2-0 pitching record with a microscopic 0.27 E.R.A in five starts.

"[Baeza] is probably the most talented player in Southern California," said sophomore outfielder D.J. Lewis. "He can throw a 90 mph pitch and he can drive a ball deep out of the ballpark."

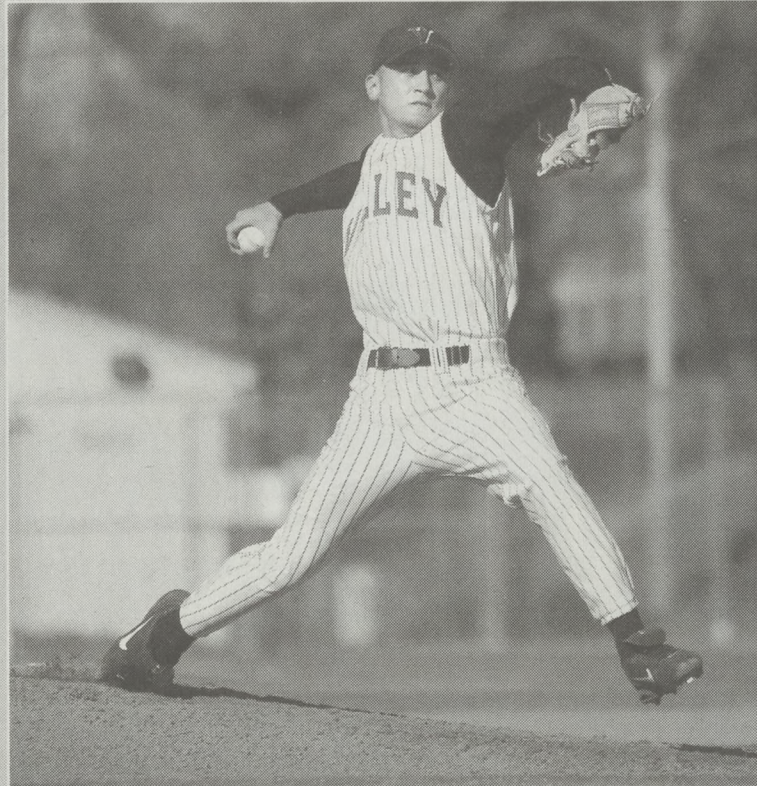
For Baeza, everything comes easy whether it be in the outfield or on the pitching mound.

"Because I've been playing two positions for some time now," said Baeza, an L. A. Polytechnic High School alumnus, "It just comes naturally to me."

"It's not like Eddie is an average pitcher or an average hitter," said Head Coach Dave Mallas. "He does both things exceptionally well and has an ability that not many players have at the [community college] level."

Mallas added that coaching Baeza was a pleasure because his work ethic and desire to play baseball was unmatched.

"He's a good boy," said



GREG BURMANN / VALLEY STAR

HEAT-Pitcher Eddie Baeza prepares to release his 90 mile fastball.

Baeza's mother. "Eddie's been very successful growing up, and I'm very proud of him."

Coming off a monumental 2004 season, one in which Baeza won the WSC Player of the Year award, both Mallas and Baeza look to improve this season.

"It's pretty tough following up a season like Eddie had offensively," said Mallas. "The only thing he needs to work on now is his pitching, which he has done."

Baeza's baseball ability is not the only thing this juggernaut brings to the Monarchs.

"We all look up to Eddie because he brings a great sense of leadership ability to this team," said Lewis. "He's definitely one of the leaders."

"I want to be known as a great team player," said Baeza. "Awards are nice but they don't mean anything if my team isn't

successful. Even if I struggled, I'd be happy as long as we win."

"I want to show that the Valley baseball team can win again," said Baeza. "My goal is to throw away our losing reputation and do my best to take this team to the championship."

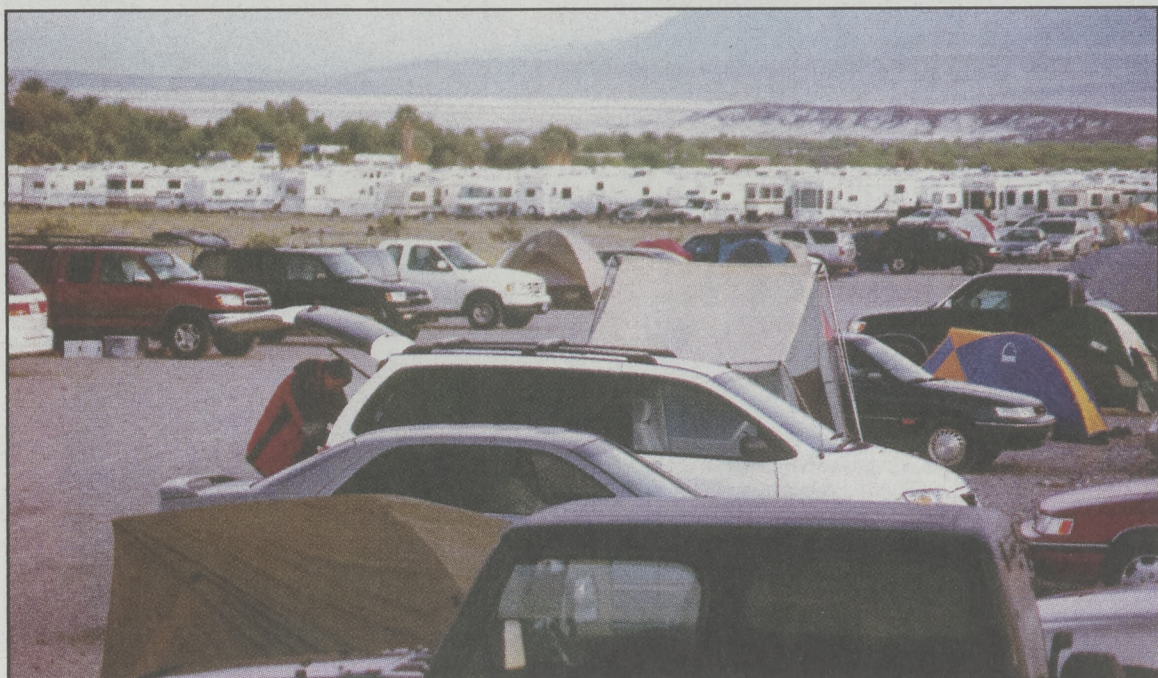
Baeza's hard work and leadership has paid off - he's been drafted three times out of high school. But, because of numerous injuries he was not signed.

"His skills speak for him," said Mallas. "Eddie's very easily a top D-1 caliber player. He can be a major league ball-player as long as he stays healthy."

"I'd like to be drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers," said Baeza when asked where he would like to play professionally. "I'm a home-town boy and Dodger's Stadium has the best field around."

The Lively Spot: Death Valley

Photos and Text by
Cynthia Perry
Layout By
Greg Burmann



CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

UNDESERTED - Thousands of visitors flooding the valley stretched resources to the limit. Hotels, RV spots and even tent campsites were at maximum capacity and visitors had to wait in lines for gasoline, food and restrooms.

If you're looking for the party, it's in Death Valley. With the driest place in North America now filled with a lake and hundreds of acres of blooming flowers, more visitors are flocking to the park than ever before.

Every hotel room for a 100 miles is booked through the end of April and tent campers are tent-pole to tent-pole in nearly every campsite available. Lines of jovial visitors form for food, gas and restrooms in the usually sparsely populated valley.

Yet none of these inconveniences stops determined hikers, cyclists, photographers, flower lovers and even mariners from experiencing what is being called a once in a lifetime landscape at the Death Valley National Park.

The unusually high rainfall this year in the Valley, six inches, up from the usual three, has caused flowers and tourism to bloom alike in unprecedented numbers.

Those still hoping to visit before the blooms fade in late April, can make a day trip from Los Angeles. It takes about four hours to get to the south end of the valley at Shoshone, California, then, about two hours to drive through the park, then another five or six to return from the north end via Mojave.

Campgrounds are crowded but tent sites can still be found in the many overflow campgrounds being made available for the recent increase in demand.



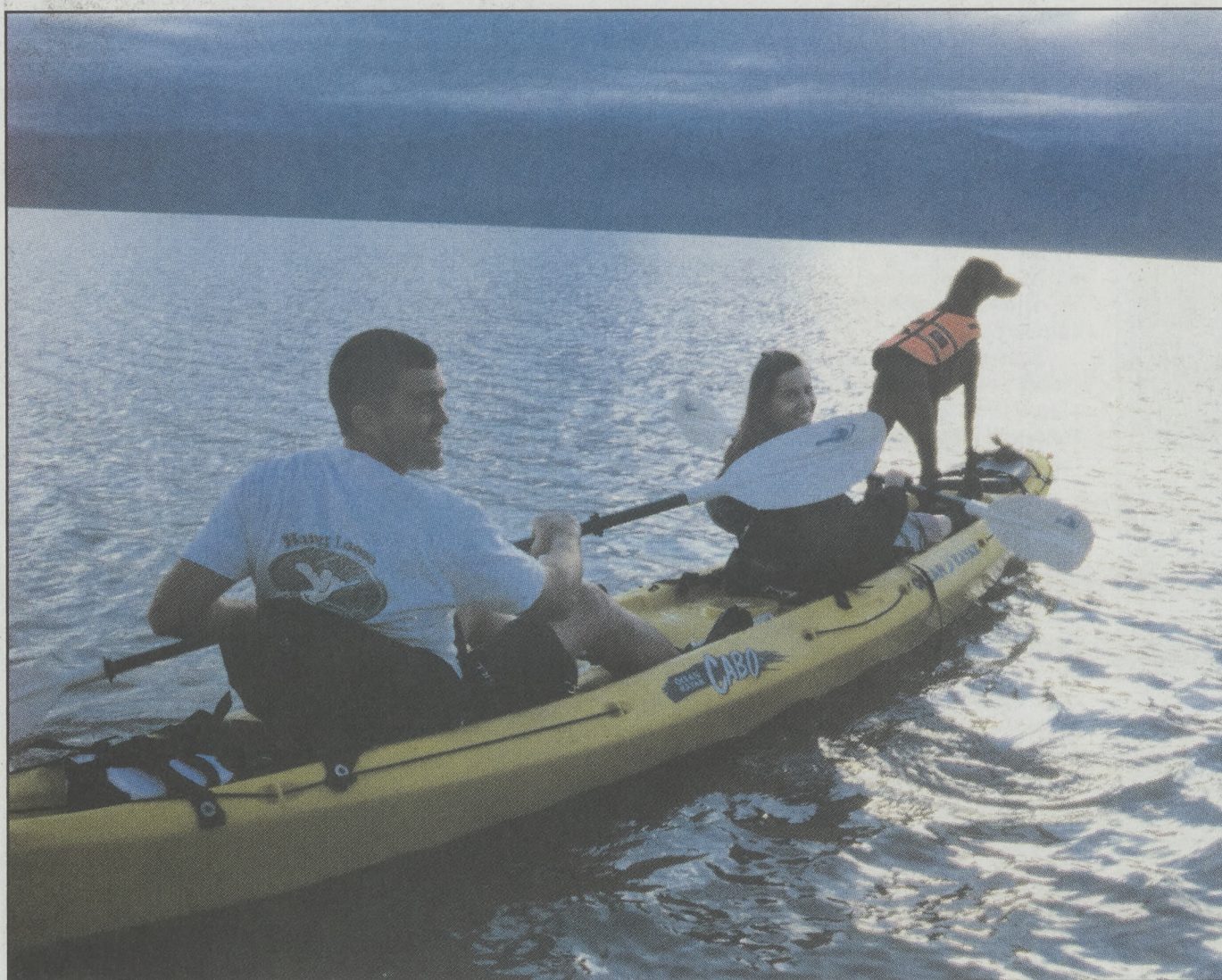
CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

SPRING'S WHIFF - Madeline and Helmi Hisserich-Patterson inhale the fragrance of rainy desert blooms.



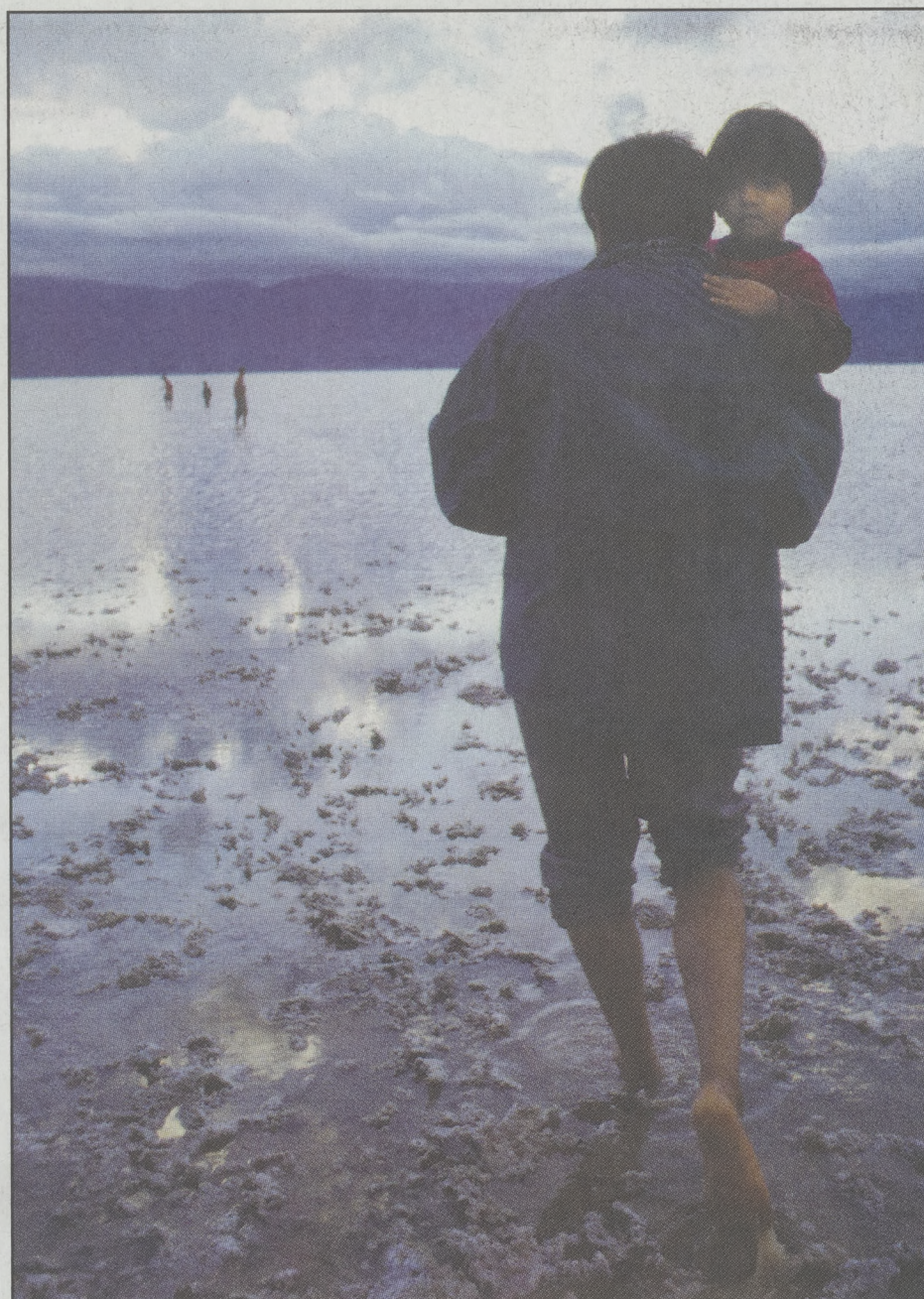
CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

BLOOM WITH A VIEW - Photographers who have recently flocked to the valley were not deterred by the unusual sprinkles of rain.



CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

SALTY DOG - Kayakers Jayson and Cayla Swan of Newport Beach could not pass up the chance to paddle across the driest spot in North America.



CYNTHIA PERRY / SPECIAL TO THE STAR

FAMILY OUTING - Pranav Desai trails his children along what is usually a salt bed. He has been bringing his family to Death Valley every year for a decade, but has never seen more than a bit of mud here before.